

November 2008

Volume 1, Number 2

In This Issue

- The Role of the "Data Coach"
- The Data Pyramid
- Indiana's Formative Assessments, Part II
- Taking a Data Walk
- Welcome Principals!
- The Role of the "Classroom Supporter"
- The Coaching Cycle
- What's next?
- Questions & Contacts

Second Training of Coaches with their Principals

The second training of English language arts and mathematics instructional coaches from comprehensive schools occurred on November 5 with their principals attending on November 6. You will find the details here.

➤ **Principals:** We view this newsletter as a way for you and your instructional coach to review and discuss their training and how they are thinking about applying what they have learned in the school. *Please read and use it as a point of conversation with your coach.*

A Data Day! - November 5

DATA – the focus of the second training for coaches. Understanding student achievement data is the first step to providing appropriate instruction to students. Thus, data was the day-long topic for November 5. Read below to hear the specifics of the day!

The Role of the "Data Coach"

In some schools the instructional coach also wears the hat of "data coach." However, in those schools with both a data coach and an instructional coach the two coaches compliment one another and need to work closely together – along with the **principal** – to delineate roles and develop a plan for supporting teachers in the work of analyzing student data to inform instruction.

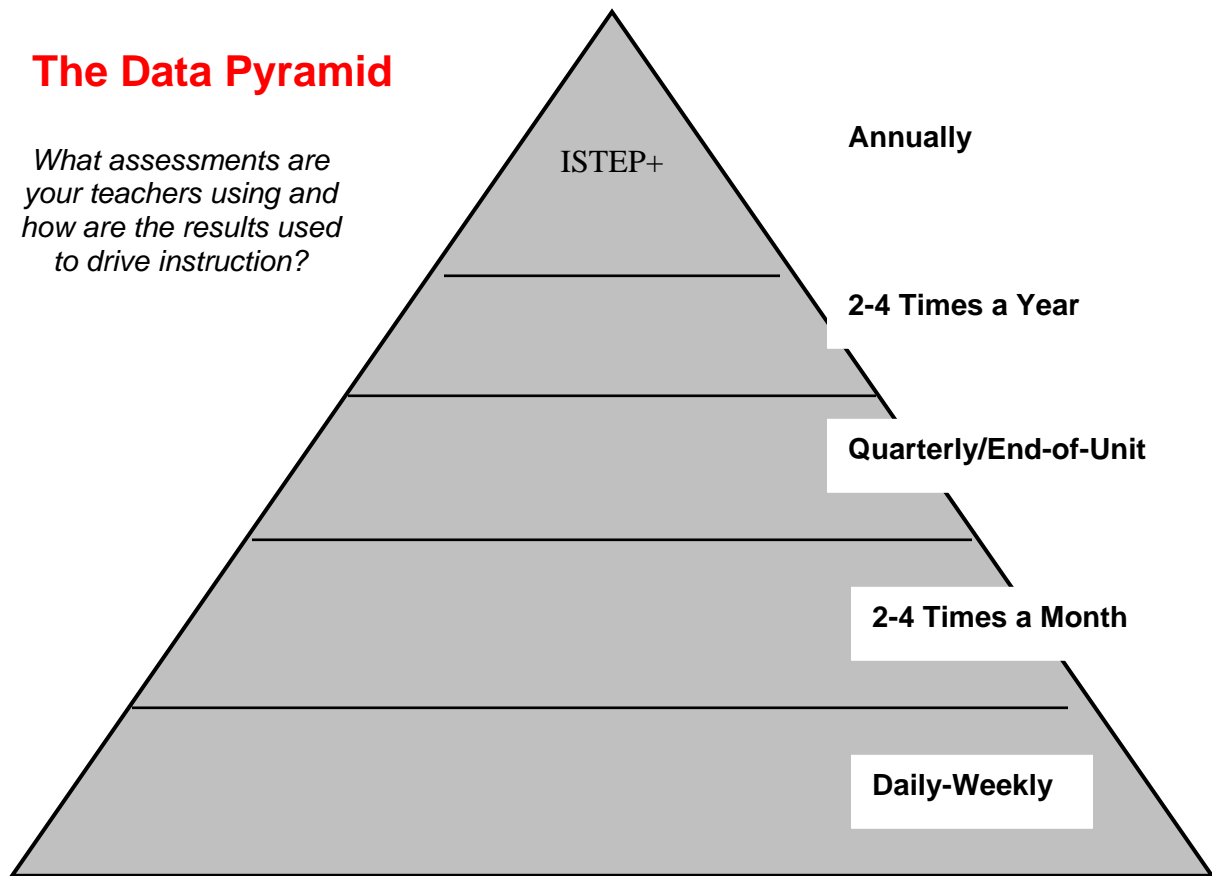
Presenter, Sonia Caus Gleason from Learning Innovations at West Ed, reminded the audience that of course, ISTEP+ scores are not enough. We need a variety of data to determine how and what students are and are not learning. Sonia suggested the use of the "Data Pyramid" to ensure that that multiple student data sources are used.

➤ **Principals and Coaches:** You can use the pyramid on the next page to determine the types of assessments being used at your schools. Ask yourselves and the teachers:

- At what levels do we have ample data about student learning?
- At what levels do we need more student data to inform instruction?
- Does the data vary by grade level or teacher? Should it?
- Which teachers make good use of the daily and weekly student data to inform instruction?
- How might those teachers help their colleagues in increasing their knowledge and use of data to drive instruction?

The Data Pyramid

What assessments are your teachers using and how are the results used to drive instruction?



Source: Love, Stiles, K.E., Mundry, S., & DiRanna, K. (2007). "A data coach's guide to improving learning for all students." Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Indiana's Formative Assessments - Part II

After last month's instructional coaches' training, coaches asked for additional information regarding Indiana's new formative assessments: Wireless Generation and Acuity.

Practitioners who are in the field using the assessments each day shared additional functions and reports available, training tips, and helpful hints. **Deeann Higgs** from Evansville-Vanderburgh School Cooperation presented on Acuity with a focus on "Lessons Learned" from the corporation's piloting of the assessment tool.

Holly Mencer from Hawthorne Elementary in MSD Warren Township returned to provide additional information about using Wireless Generation and creating data walls/rooms.

Staff from the Indiana Department of Education, Office of Assessment attended as well. They collected questions from the participants and will create a "Question and Answer" document for Title I to send to coaches and principals soon. Contact information for the Office of Assessment is located on the last page of the newsletter.

Taking a Data Walk!

➤ **Principals**, your coach might soon be asking you for the space and time to create a data wall and conduct a data walk or carousel with the teachers.

What is a data walk? Data from the bottom rungs of the data pyramid - daily and weekly assessments - are copied and placed on chart paper. The data are categorized by student, by classroom, or by grade level. In small groups, teachers move from poster to poster, discussing what they see, and writing down observations and questions about the data.

After five minutes, teacher groups move to the next poster of data, review it and add any additional questions and observations beyond that provided by previous groups.



Then, as a whole group, the teachers discuss the observations and questions, considering how the information applies to their instruction and how they might discover the answers to the listed questions.

A data walk is a great example of hands-on, classroom-based, continuous professional development. **Have a “Walk” in your school today!**

November 6 - Welcome Principals!

Day 2 of the training included the participation of the principals. Most of the 50 principals attended the training, understanding the importance of their support of this initiative.

The Indiana Department of Education, Director of Title I Academic Support, Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, opened the morning with a review of Indiana's Theory of Action based on the research of high-poverty, high-performing schools. The theory is important for all educators in Indiana to understand as it is from this theory that requirements of and supports for Indiana's schools and districts in improvement emanate.

Lee Ann also explained Indiana's new Differentiated Accountability Model for Focused, Comprehensive, and Comprehensive-Intensive Schools.

Lastly, Lee Ann reiterated the expectations of principals, coaches and others for this initiative if student achievement is to increase through improved instructional practices. She emphasized the expectations for principals:

- **Principals:**
 - Are the leaders in improving instruction.
 - Ensure that the coach works with the adults in the building - not with students.
 - Meet regularly (weekly) with the coach.
 - Support and collaborate with the coach.

The Role of the “Classroom Supporter”

How do I approach teachers to “coach” them? How do I begin? According to presenter Susan Villani, Senior Consultant at WestEd, the first step is to consider the individual teacher; think about the person’s personality, attitude, style, and need for structure. Then, make a conscious decision about how best to approach the person based on the continuum of coaching behavior as developed by Glickman:

- Coach in a nondirective manner
 - Listen, Clarify, Encourage
- Coach in a collaborative manner
 - Reflect, Present, Problem-solve, Negotiate
- Coach in a directive manner
 - Direct, Standardize, Reinforce

A “one size fits all” approach to coaching is not appropriate; differentiation is as critical for adult learners as it is for children. ➤ **Principals:** How can you assist the coach from your experience in working with selected teachers? Which style seems to work best for whom?

Source: Glickman, C. (1981). *Developmental Supervision: Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Instruction.

The Coaching Cycle

Observations of lessons and student engagement are the cornerstone of coaching. Is there a process or system that has been shown to be highly effective in observing and coaching? “Yes” according to our presenters Sonia and Susan, who introduced a 3-step cycle of coaching. They emphasized, through role-play, the importance of the discussion that occurs between the coach and teacher *before* the observation. Here are some key questions and comments that Susan, as the coach, asked Sonia, the teacher.

- What am I going to see? How can I be helpful?
- What are you going to do and how will you know if the students are learning it?
- What you would like me to focus on – what data would help you?
- Will you need to differentiate the lesson in any way?
- Is there a product that you expect at the end of lesson?

1. The Planning Conversation

- Before the lesson

2. Coaching Observation & Data Gathering

- During the lesson

3. The Reflecting Conversation

- After the lesson

The Coaching Cycle

Source: Dunne, K & Villani, S. (2007). “Mentoring new teachers through collaborative coaching: Facilitation and Training Guide.” San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

- Let me give you some examples of what I could do - I could circulate around the room and write down which students are using the manipulatives or what they are saying about the task so you can learn how they connecting to the lesson.

What's Next?

Instructional Coaches Training – Thursday, December 11, 2008 at The Fountains

8:00 a.m. – Registration and Continental Breakfast

3:30 p.m. – Adjourn

- Due to multiple reasons, such as cost, the audience must be kept to 50 people, and therefore coaches *only* are invited to attend.
- Principals and districts staff, please use this newsletter and conversations with the coaches to keep informed.

Questions about Assessments?

For questions about:

Mathematics diagnostic tool ***Wireless Generation*** contact:

Michelle L. Wenzel – Math Assessment Specialist, Office of Student Assessment
mwenzel@doe.in.gov 317-232-9050

English/Language Arts diagnostic tool ***Wireless Generation*** contact:

Kelly Connelly – ELA Assessment Specialist, Office of Student Assessment
kconnelly@doe.in.gov 317-232-9050

Diagnostic tool ***Acuity*** contact:

Cynthia Hopkins - Assessment Specialist, Office of Student Assessment
chopkins@doe.in.gov 317-232-9050

Questions about Instructional Coaches?

For general questions contact:

Becky Johnson - Support Specialist, Office of Title I Academic Support

Email: bjohnson@doe.in.gov *Phone:* 877-418-7240 or 317-232-0540



**Don't forget to
complete your
Communication
Logs!**